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Letter dated 10 July 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 10 July 1998, addressed to you by Mr. Aytuğ Plümer, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Volkan VURAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 10 July 1998 from Mr. Aytuğ Plümer addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 23 June 1998 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative at the United Nations, which contains allegations levelled against the Turkish Cypriot side in an attempt to disguise the ongoing heavy militarization campaign in South Cyprus (A/52/965-S/1998/559).

At the outset, I wish to underline that the Cyprus question arose in 1963, when the Greek Cypriot wing of the bi-national Republic of Cyprus, established under international treaties in 1960, attempted to impose its political will on the Turkish Cypriot partner by force of arms. In the process, the Greek Cypriots usurped the title of the "Government of the Republic of Cyprus" but have not been able to impose their political will on the Turkish Cypriot people. As a result of the Greek Cypriot onslaught in December 1963, Turkish Cypriots were forcefully ejected from all State organs and subjected to brute force, oppression and discrimination. Hundreds of civilians were killed and thousands rendered homeless refugees. The Turkish Cypriots did not bow to this attempted takeover of the bi-national partnership State and, through its national resistance, prevented the Greek Cypriot side from extending its illegal writ over the Turkish Cypriot side. The crux of the Cyprus question is precisely this continuing attempt by the Greek Cypriot side to do so.

The Greek Cypriot representative, in a vain attempt to absolve his side from the responsibility of creating and perpetuating the Cyprus dispute, once again refers to the legitimate presence of a guarantor power in Northern Cyprus as an "illegal occupation". I wish to reiterate that the only illegal occupation in Cyprus is the 35-year-old usurpation and occupation by the Greek Cypriot side of the seat of Government of the once bi-national Republic of Cyprus.

Turkey intervened on the island following the coup d'état engineered by Greece in 1974, which constituted a blatant attempt by Greece to annex the island (enosis) and was described even by the Greek Cypriot side's own leader, Archbishop Makarios, in his speech before the Security Council on 19 July 1974, as "an invasion" by Greece. One should also recall that the Turkish intervention in Cyprus was carried out against the background of an 11-year-old systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing directed against the Turkish Cypriot people by the Greek Cypriot side, acting in collusion with Greece. Hence, the necessity to dispatch a United Nations peacekeeping force (the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus) to the island in early 1964.

It hardly needs to be stressed that Turkey's presence on the island, which emanates from the 1960 Treaty of Guarantee, is a vital security requirement for the Turkish Cypriots, as it serves as a deterrent against the repetition of Greek-Greek Cypriot aggression. In the face of the unprecedented build-up of arms and armed forces by the Greek Cypriot administration and the implementation of the "joint military doctrine" with Greece, the necessity of maintaining the Turkish deterrent becomes all the more obvious. It should be noted that the

Greek Cypriot administration still wages a war of attrition against Northern Cyprus, subjecting the Turkish Cypriots to an all-embracing inhuman embargo.

For some time now we have been conveying to you the views and concerns of the Turkish Cypriot side over the implementation of the "joint military doctrine" between the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece and, in this context, pointing to the dangers posed by the planned deployment of the S-300 missiles, the construction of military air and naval bases for use by Greece and the possible deployment of Greek combat aircraft in the said airbase in Paphos. It will be recalled on 16 June 1998 the Greek Cypriot administration brought the already tense situation on the island to the point of a crisis by allowing the landing of Greek military aircraft at the Paphos military airbase in south Cyprus. This is the first time that Greek military aircraft have been deployed in south Cyprus outside of a military exercise and constitutes a grave threat to the stability in the island and the region.

The provocative remarks made by the President of Greece, Mr. Constantinos Stephanopoulos, during his four-day official visit to South Cyprus from 25 to 28 June 1998, to the effect that "Cyprus itself is Greece" and "It is not Greece which is claiming that Cyprus is part of Hellenism; history clearly tells us it is" (Greek Cypriot press of 26 and 27 June 1998) sheds light on the true political and military objectives of the Greek-Greek Cypriot front. Mr. Stephanopoulos made no secret of the joint efforts to achieve further "qualitative improvements" in the "joint military doctrine" being implemented between the Greek Cypriot administration and Greece (Greek Cypriot daily Cyprus Mail of 26 June 1998).

Meanwhile, the Greek Cypriot press reported that the Greek Cypriot Defence Minister, Mr. Yannakis Omirou, has travelled to the Russian Federation on a four-day visit to witness the test-launching of S-300 missiles by Greek Cypriot army officers. The Greek Cypriot newspaper Cyprus Weekly of 10 July 1998 reports that the test took place on 9 July 1998 at a firing range 1,200 kilometres south of Moscow and was observed by a Greek Cypriot delegation, including Mr. Omirou and the Greek Cypriot National Guard Commander Demetris Demou.

In view of the foregoing, the so-called demilitarization proposals made by the Greek Cypriot leader, Mr. Glafcos Clerides, are indicative of the Greek Cypriot side's insincerity and hypocrisy about the security aspect of the Cyprus dispute. Demilitarization of Cyprus has never been on the agenda of the United Nations as a subject to be discussed and agreed to during the negotiating process, but as an ultimate objective to be taken up by the parties after an overall settlement. The relevant paragraph of the United Nations "set of ideas" states that "the demilitarization of the federal republic remains an objective" (para. 53). In any case, the attempt by the Greek Cypriot side to use the S-300 missile system as a bargaining chip is futile. If Mr. Clerides is genuinely interested in the security aspect of the Cyprus dispute, he should first accept the implementation of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus package of military measures for reducing tension along the border, as called for in successive Security Council resolutions on Cyprus.

The repeated allegations made by the Greek Cypriot administration demonstrate that it is not prepared to acknowledge the present reality of the existence of two separate States which will constitute the framework of a new partnership based on the sovereign equality of the two sides in Cyprus. Instead, the Greek Cypriot administration persists in a strategy of distorting the nature of the Cyprus dispute and creating further tension through militarization. These efforts, needless to say, are counter-productive and clearly do not contribute to the search for an overall settlement in Cyprus.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 61, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Aytuğ PLÜMER
Representative
Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus